

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

## INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY China

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SUBJECT Training and Maneuvers of Chinese Communist  
Armored Force Command

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INFO. [REDACTED]**DO NOT CIRCULATE**SUPPLEMENT TO  
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1. After Lieutenant General Ssu-wei-tzu-lo-fu, Soviet adviser to the Chinese Communist Armored Force Command (AFC), explained the training program to Chinese Communist cadres of company grade and above on 2 November 1951, the AFC held an educational meeting to discuss measures for assuring completion of training within the specified period of time.<sup>1</sup> Both Soviet company-grade officers and Chinese Communist cadres of battalion grade attended this meeting. At this time CHANG Huai-chih (張懷志), commander of the 1 Independent Tank Regiment, opposed the Soviet training program on the grounds that the time for training was too short and was not consistent with existing Chinese Communist practices of troop-control. Although the USSR assumed responsibility for training the Chinese Communist armored regiments, the Chinese Communist cadres could not evade their responsibility for exercising control over the units during the training period; i.e., no coordination existed between training and control. Language difficulties would also make it impossible for Soviet troops to train Chinese troops directly, and interpreters would always be required if Chinese and Soviets were to practice together. Consequently, the results of the planned three months' training could not be as satisfactory as initially envisaged. HAN then asked for a longer training period and a different training procedure. He said that training should be prolonged for six months and that methods already used by the Chinese Communists in the training of troops (i.e., training and control must be unified and the Chinese Communists must be responsible) should be followed. Soviet personnel should give classroom and practice instruction at specified hours. In field exercises, both Soviet and Chinese troops might be able to work together.
2. HAN's proposals, however, were opposed by the Soviets, who insisted that the program which they advocated must be followed, because it had been drafted by the Soviet military authorities. Moreover, it had been accepted by the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) and must not be changed. They maintained that only measures to implement the Soviet-proposed program should be discussed during the meeting.
3. This dispute was resolved when HSU Kuang-ta, Commander of the AFC, said the Soviet-proposed program would be followed, and any difficulties which might

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arise would then be considered on their merit. After the meeting ended, all medium-grade cadres were very much dissatisfied with the Soviet attitude; however, their respective political commissars won them over, one by one, and the original Soviet-proposed program was followed.

4. During the period of instruction the Soviets had to depend upon interpreters graduated from the Harbin Language School. Most of these interpreters did not understand military terminology and were consequently unable to make the Chinese Communist troops understand the instructor. As a result, Chinese Communist cadres and soldiers often asked Soviet officers to explain many questions which had already been answered during the preceding instruction. This took a great deal of time and the Soviet officers then thought that Chinese Communist cadres and soldiers were not qualified to be members of the armored units. Difficulties of this type were even more numerous during field exercises, since there were not enough interpreters to meet the necessary requirements. It often happened that the Chinese Communists would drive their tanks to the south after the Soviets had ordered them to proceed eastward. Many misunderstandings of this type occurred. However, as a result of efforts made by the Chinese Communist political workers to suppress the feelings of the Chinese Communist soldiers, no serious incidents occurred.
5. At the end of this three months' training period the Soviets admitted that the results had not been satisfactory and that additional study and practice were necessary. This responsibility, however, has been left to the Soviet advisers in China.
6. Starting 14 May the AFC held extensive field exercises at Ch'anghsintien (116-12, 39-49). Two tank regiments participated, and the equipment used included 20 T-34 tanks, 4 self-propelled guns, 4 JS-2 tanks, 9 YAK-15 planes and 12 P-51 planes. One artillery company and 2 infantry regiments also participated in these maneuvers, which were witnessed by important figures in the RMC, the AFC and the North China Military Area as well as by the Soviet advisers.
7. These field exercises were divided into two major parts: namely, problems of armored attack and defense, and target practice. The problems of armored attack included:
  - a. Armored reconnaissance;
  - b. Occupation of combat positions by armored vehicles, including tanks;
  - c. Inspection of vehicles and weapons;
  - d. Camouflage of tanks and positions;
  - e. Occupation of positions for armored attack;
  - f. Movement over difficult terrain;
  - g. Bazooka defense;
  - h. Occupation of enemy front-line positions; and
  - i. Continuation of reconnaissance and infantry occupation of secured positions from the armored attack.

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8. The defense problems included:
  - a. Occupation of defense and counter-attack positions;
  - b. Camouflage;
  - c. Inspection of vehicles and weapons;
  - d. Launching counter-attacks as soon as the enemy comes within firing range;
  - e. Tactical counter-attacks to surround or bypass the enemy; and
  - f. Orderly retreat.
9. After the conclusion of these attack and defense problems, firing practice was held. All officers and men participated so that they could become acquainted with the capabilities of these weapons.
10. The two tank regiments were divided into an offensive and defensive side. The attacking tank regiment was assigned the air force support and one infantry regiment. The defending regiment was assigned one artillery company, which included both anti-aircraft and field guns, and one infantry regiment. A maneuver command post was established. In addition, an air-ground liaison radio station, one liaison station, an emergency repair squad, one first aid station, a rear hospital, a supply station, and a transportation corps were set up.
11. The maneuver began with the attack regiment ordering its reconnaissance units to begin reconnoitering the ground and to bring its tanks into combat positions. Prepared positions for tanks had been constructed before the maneuver started. At the same time inspection of vehicles and weapons and camouflage for the attacking unit was also begun. On the morning of 15 May reconnaissance units brought back a small number of prisoners. After preliminary questioning of these prisoners three planes were sent out to locate the enemy, and tanks were then brought into attack position. Two hours later the air force reports were received and the regimental commander of the attacking regiment, riding in his radio car, ordered his company commanders to prepare for action. At the same time the air force was ordered to attack the enemy tanks and to support the artillery. At noon, after the regimental commander had ordered his attack, the company commanders signalled their vehicles to advance against the enemy positions. Self-propelled guns laid down heavy fire to cover the tank advance. After fighting for the period of time previously established, the attacking regiment occupied the positions initially held by the defending regiment which then withdrew in defeat. This concluded the first engagement. On 16 May infantry units occupied the positions which the attacking regiment had captured, while the attacking regiment continued to advance. The defending regiment, being unable to resist, staged an orderly withdrawal which brought an end to the problem. No maneuvers were held on 17 May, but on 18 May the two regiments changed positions (the attacking regiment in the first problem assumed defensive positions and vice versa) and the entire problem was repeated. This problem ended 20 May and no maneuvers were held on 21 May. Firing practice began on 22 May. Wooden targets two meters wide and 3.5 meters tall were erected as targets for tanks firing at a distance of 150 meters. Target practice continued for two days with each officer and man firing five rounds apiece. Field exercises ended on 24 May and a meeting was held to review them.

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12. The RMC made the following comments on these field exercises:

- a. Equipment was not handled skillfully. During the maneuvers several accidents occurred, including two motor cars turned over, destruction of a third motor car, collision of two armored cars, and an artillery piece was damaged by a tank which fell off a hill.<sup>2</sup>
- b. Camouflaging of tanks was not well done.
- c. Not enough cover positions were built.<sup>3</sup>
- d. Coordination of the air force with ground units was not satisfactory.
- e. The role of the artillery was not satisfactory.
- f. Accuracy in aiming during target practice was only 87 percent.

1. Comment. [REDACTED] and referenced reports.

2. Comment. The report does not clearly state whether the tank fell on top of an artillery piece or the gun mounted on the tank was damaged by this downfall.

3. Comment. Presumably this refers to prepared positions covering routes of enemy advance.

Enclosure: Attachment A; "Diagram of Maneuvers;" 1 page

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